

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A book management apparatus for managing book stocks of a plurality of libraries through a network, comprising:

5 book stock information management means for managing book stock information which is information about book stocks of individual libraries;

10 bibliographic information management means for managing bibliographic information comprising attributes of books managed by said book stock information management means; and

loan information management means for managing loan information about loan of the book stocks of the individual libraries.

15 2. The book management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when loan of a book is conducted between different libraries, said loan information management means enables a predetermined library to modify the loan information of another library.

20 3. The book management apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising ordering information management means for managing ordering information on books newly ordered from the individual libraries; and

ordering means for placing an order with a book wholesaler, based on the ordering information managed by

said ordering information management means.

4. The book management apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising collation information receiving means for receiving collation information derived when a book ordered by said ordering means is accessioned by a corresponding library; and

collation information transmitting means for transmitting the collation information received by said collation information receiving means to the wholesaler.

5. The book management apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising loan reserving means for registering a book ordered by said ordering means in said book stock information management means as an uncollated book and permitting loan of the book to be reserved even if the book is not yet delivered.

6. The book management apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said ordering means places an order at a price reduced in accordance with an order quantity.

7. The book management apparatus according to claim 4, further comprising reduced price estimating means for looking up the ordering information managed by said ordering information management means, to estimate a reduced price of a book which a library is going to order.

✓ 8. The book management apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising statistical information generating means for looking up the loan information managed  
5 by said loan information management means or the ordering information managed by said ordering information management means, to generate statistical information about loan or ordering of books; and

providing means for providing the statistical  
10 information generated by said statistical information generating means to the individual libraries.

✓ 9. The book management apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising request receiving means for  
15 receiving a request from a user;

searching means, responsive to reception of a request for search for a book by said request receiving means, for searching the book stock information for information about a matching book; and

20 search result transmitting means for transmitting a result of search by said searching means to the user from whom the request has been received.

10. The book management apparatus according to  
25 claim 9, further comprising keyword registration means for registering a predetermined keyword if book stock information matching the book was not found by said

searching means; and

newly registered information transmitting means,  
responsive to new registration into the book stock  
information of a book matching the keyword registered by  
5 said keyword registration means, for transmitting the newly  
registered information about the book to a user with respect  
to whom the keyword has been registered.

11. A book management method for managing book  
10 stocks of a plurality of libraries through a network,  
comprising:

a book stock information management step of  
managing book stock information which is information about  
book stocks of individual libraries;

15 a bibliographic information management step of  
managing bibliographic information comprising attributes of  
books managed in said book stock information management  
step; and

a loan information management step of managing  
20 loan information about loan of the book stocks of the  
individual libraries.

12. A computer-readable recording medium  
recording a program for causing a computer to perform a  
25 process of managing book stocks of a plurality of libraries  
through a network, wherein the computer is caused to  
function as

book stock information management means for  
managing book stock information which is information about  
book stocks of individual libraries,

5 bibliographic information management means for  
managing bibliographic information comprising attributes of  
books managed by the book stock information management means,  
and

10 loan information management means for managing  
loan information about loan of the book stocks of the  
individual libraries.